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Verhoff et al.

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(54) **MILITARY VEHICLE**

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F41H 5/16	(2006.01)
B60G 17/00	(2006.01)
F41H 7/04	(2006.01)

(52) **U.S. Cl.**
CPC ***B60G 17/00*** (2013.01); ***F41H 7/048*** (2013.01); ***F41H 5/16*** (2013.01)

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USPC 180/311, 312, 89.1, 89.12; 280/781; 294/904; 410/106; 296/193.08, 193.09, 296/203.01, 203.02, 203.04, 187.07; 89/36.08, 36.09, 36.07, 40.03, 910, 89/912, 929, 930; 414/814, 800; 109/81
See application file for complete search history.

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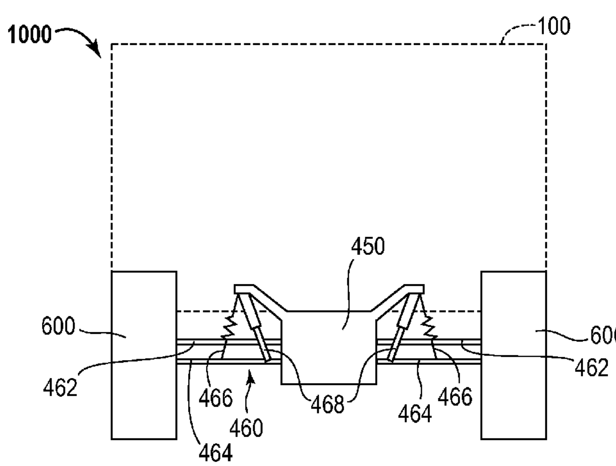
(57) **ABSTRACT**

A vehicle includes a passenger capsule, a front module, a rear module, a lift structure, and a plurality of interfaces. The passenger capsule includes a structural shell having a first end and a second end. The front module includes a first longitudinal frame member, a second longitudinal frame member, and a front axle assembly. The rear module is coupled to the second end of the passenger capsule and includes a rear axle assembly. The lift structure includes a first protrusion extending from the first longitudinal frame member and defining a first aperture and a second protrusion extending from the second longitudinal frame member and defining a second aperture. The first aperture and the second aperture form a pair of front lift points. The plurality of interfaces couples the first longitudinal frame member and the second longitudinal frame member of the front module to the first end of the structural shell such that a lifting force applied to the pair of front lift points is transmitted into the structural shell of the passenger capsule to lift the vehicle.

6 Claims, 9 Drawing Sheets



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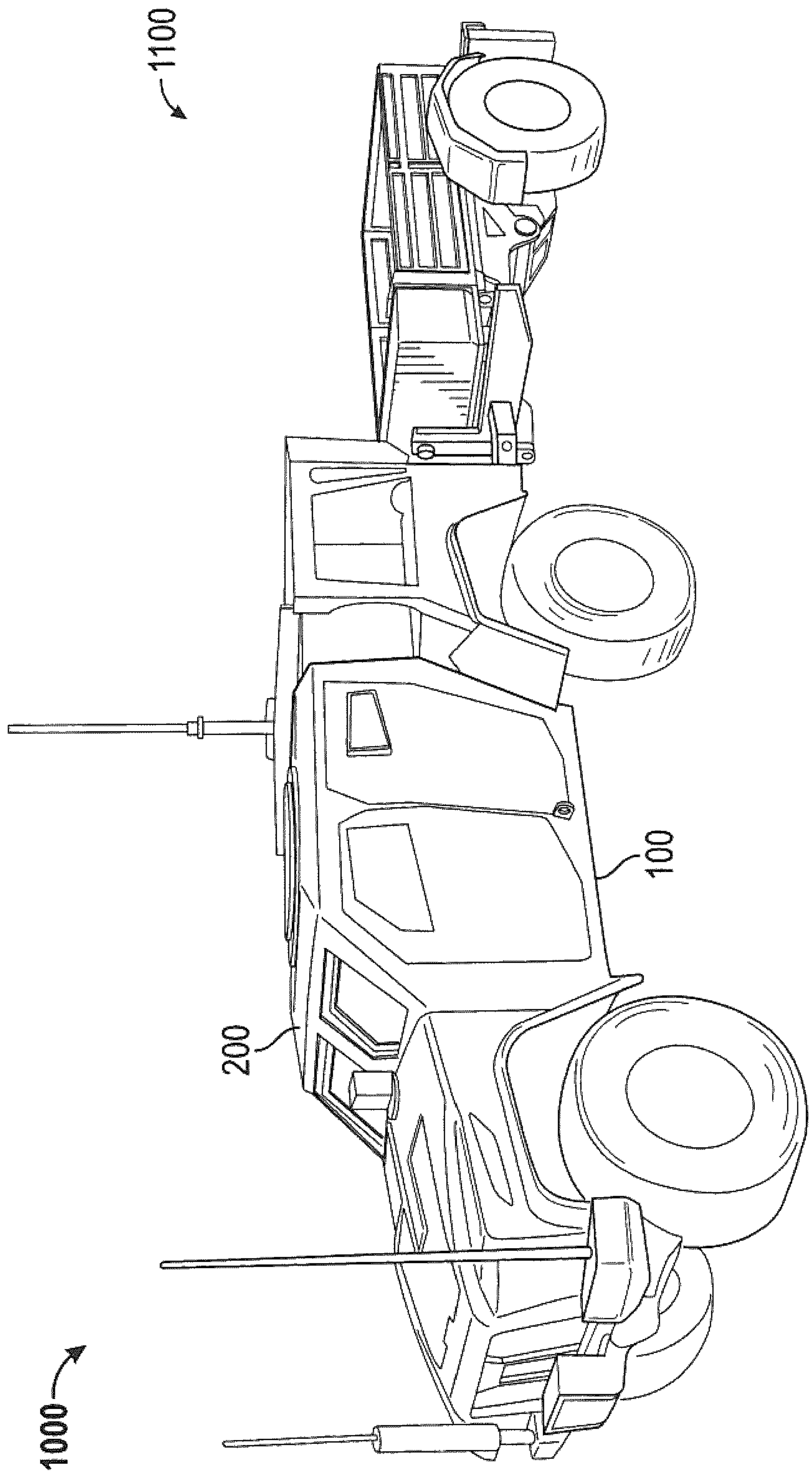
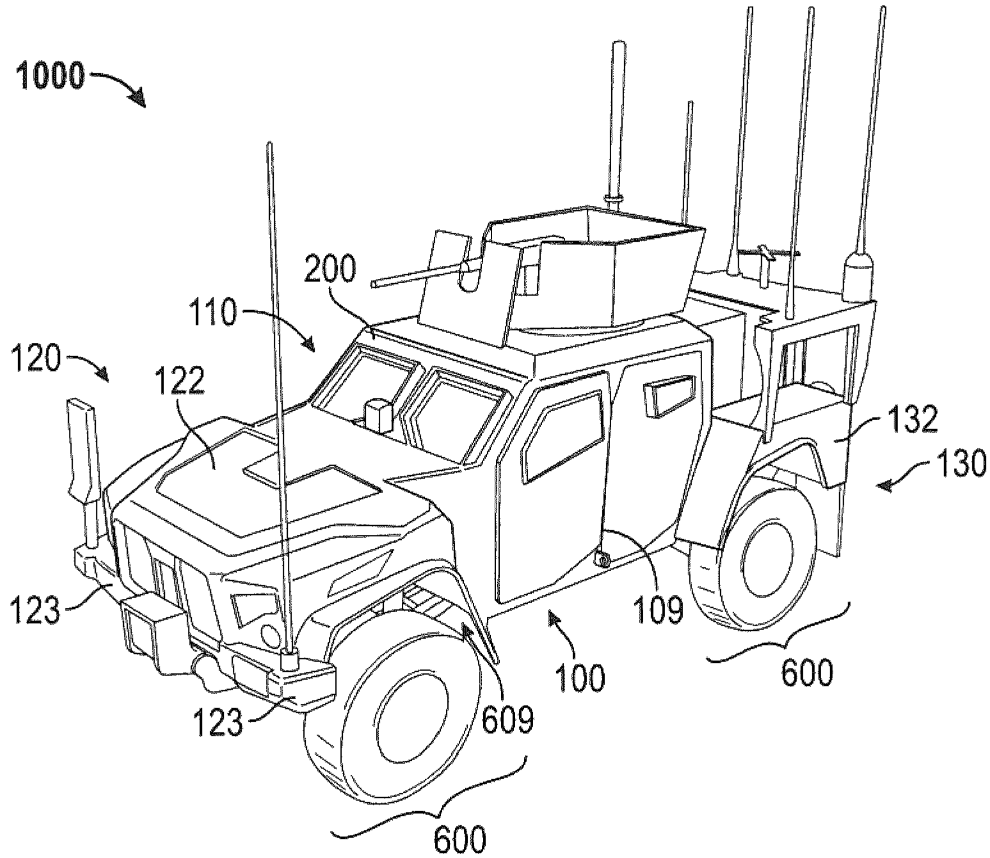


FIG. 1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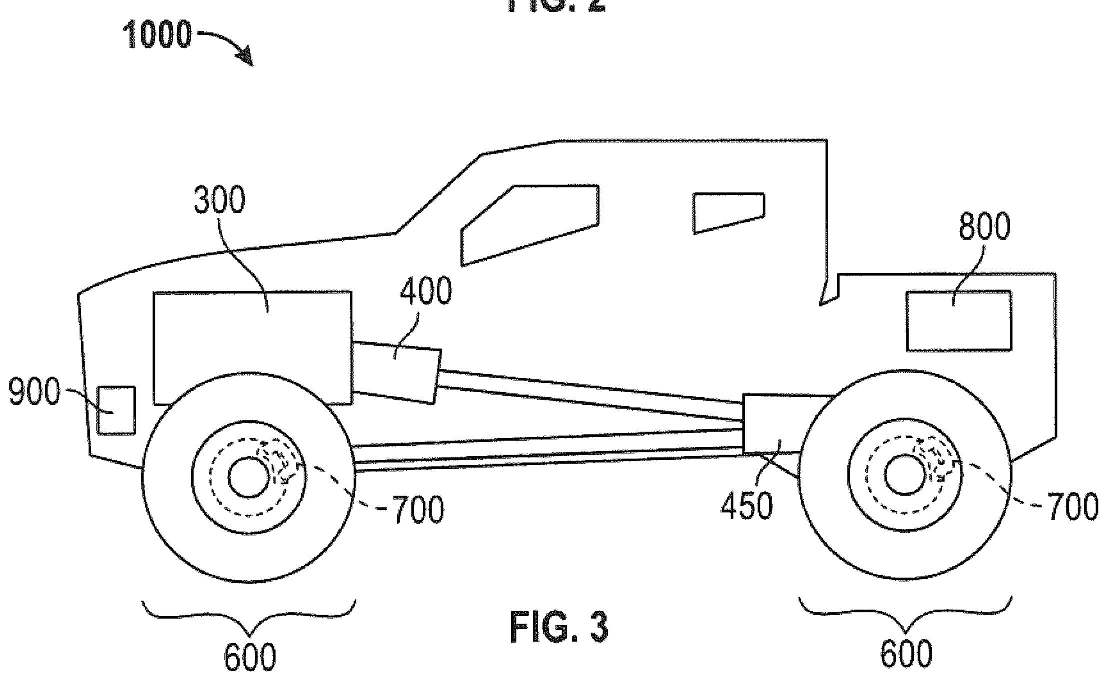
200
110
120
122
132
130
123
109
100
600
123
609
600

FIG. 2


1000
300
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400
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450
700
600
600

FIG. 3

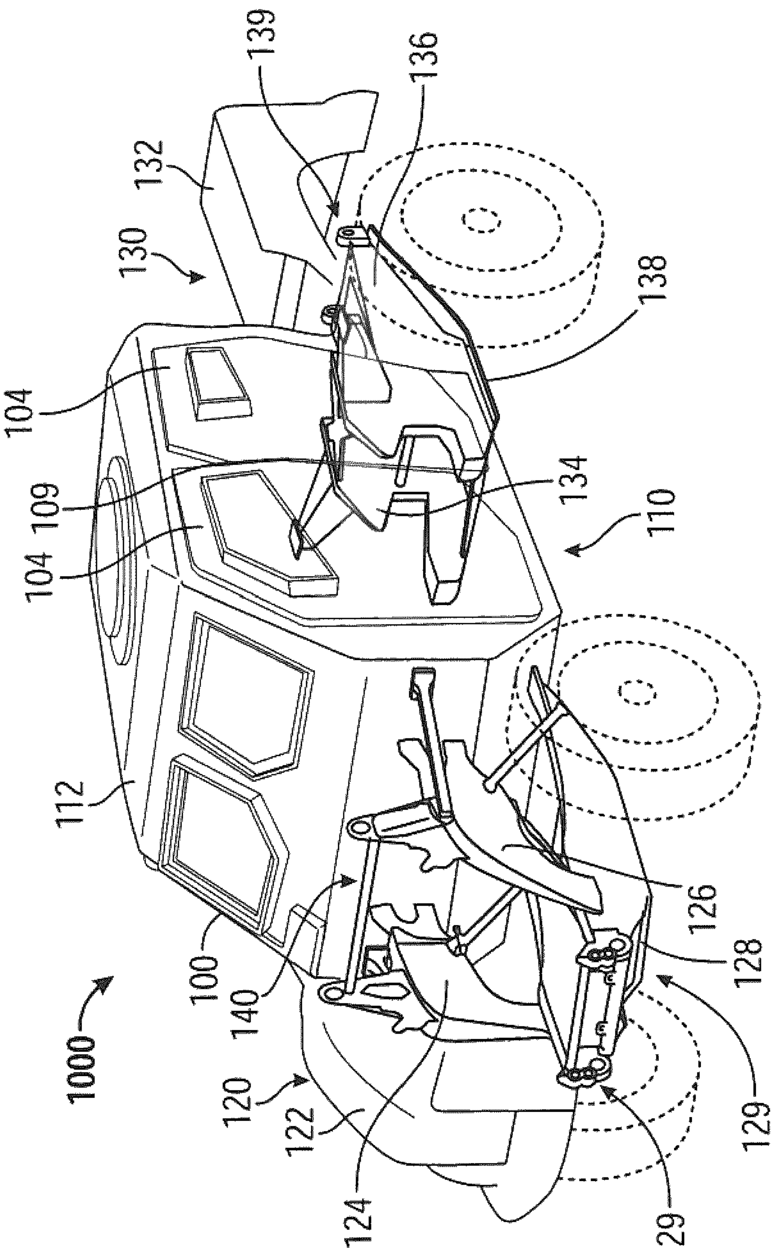
1000
100
104
104
109
110
112
120
122
124
126
128
129
129
130
132
134
136
138
139
140

FIG. 4

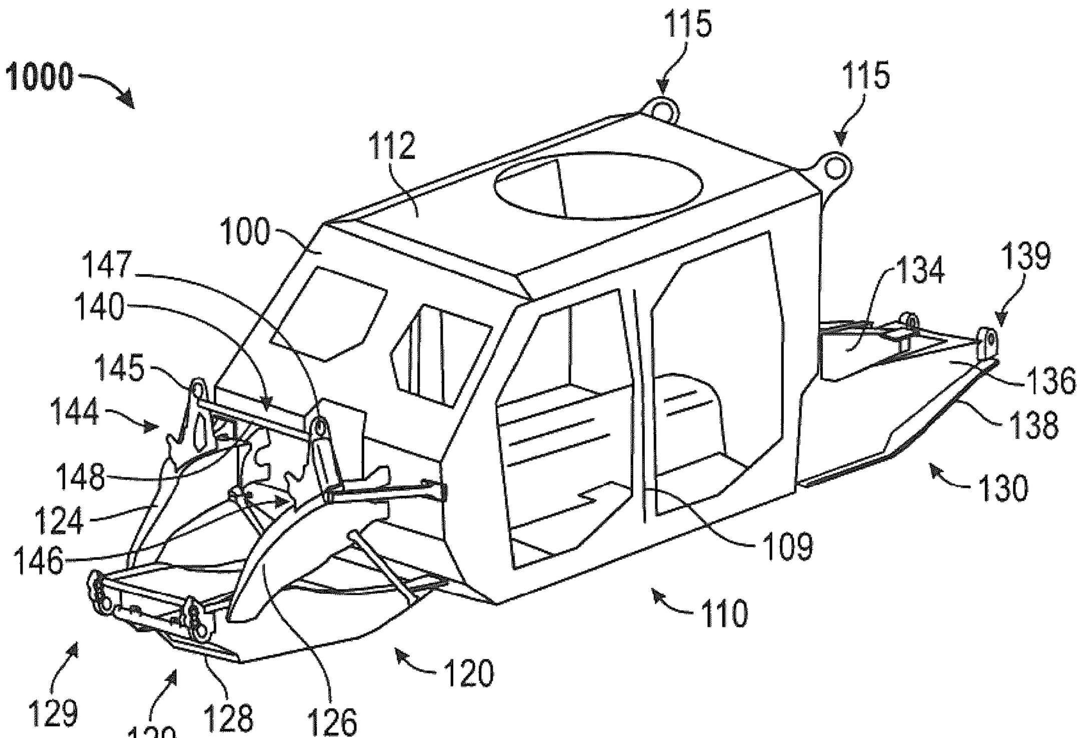
1000
115
115
112
100
147
140
145
144
148
124
146
134
139
136
138
130
109
110
120
129
129
128
126

FIG. 5

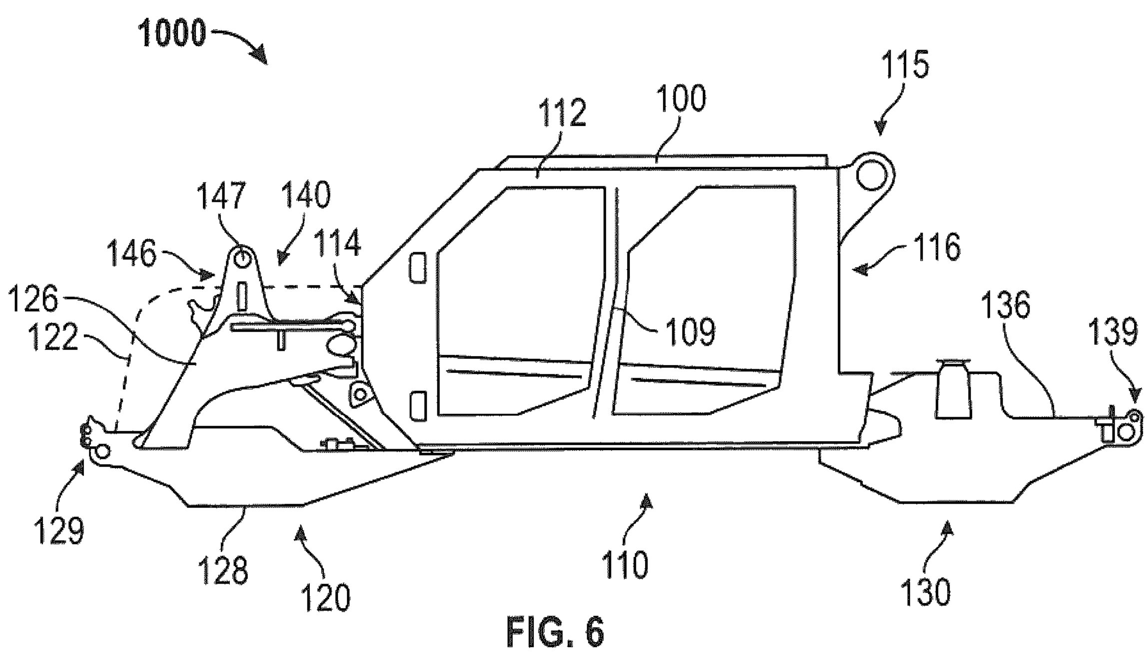
1000
115
112
100
147
140
146
114
116
126
122
109
136
139
129
128
120
110
130

FIG. 6

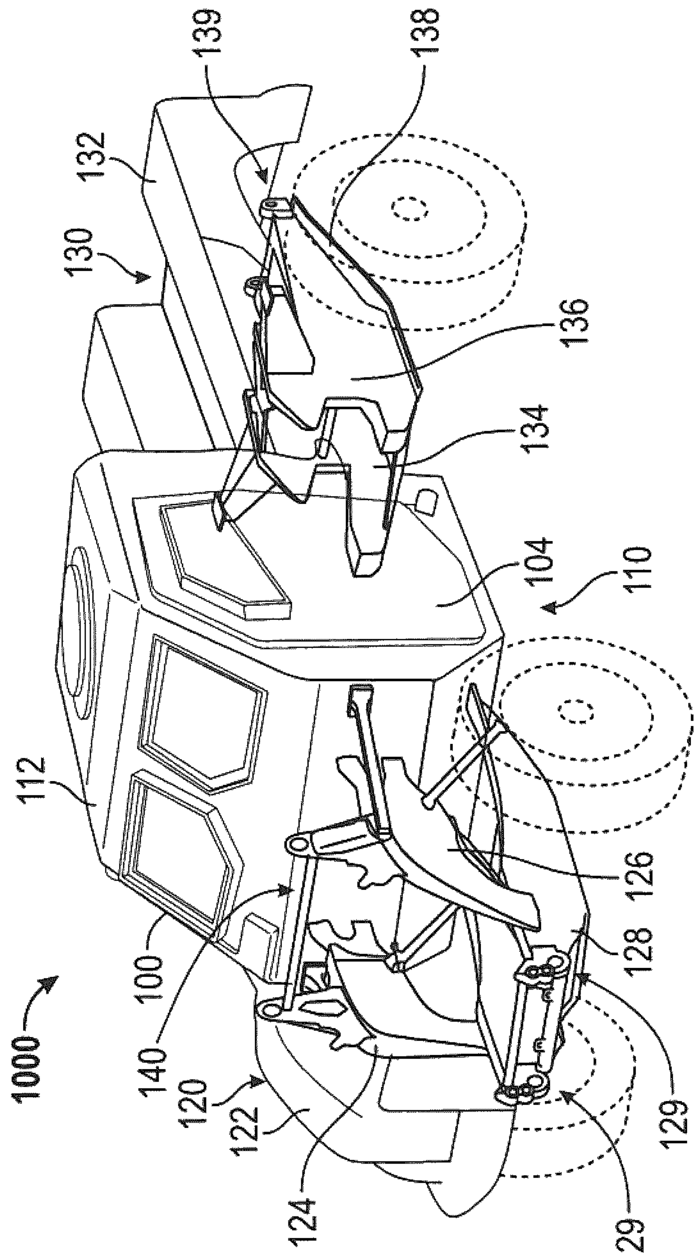
1000
100
104
110
112
120
122
124
126
128
129
129
130
132
134
136
138
139
140

FIG. 7

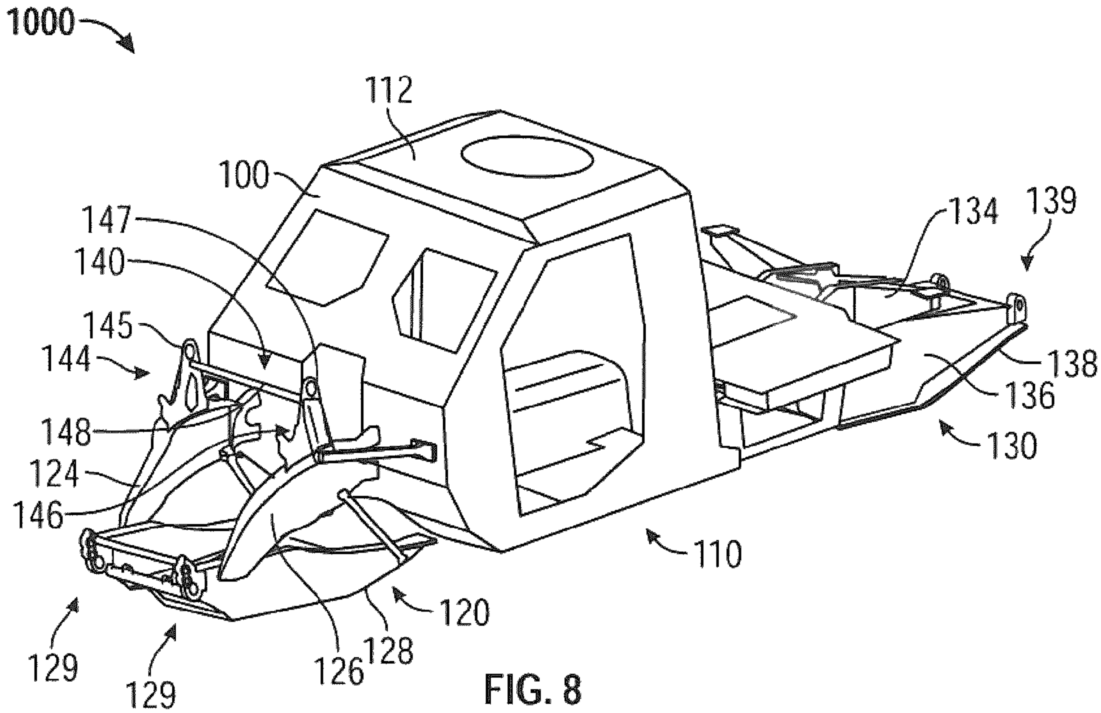
1000
112
100
147
140
145
144
148
124
146
134
139
138
136
130
110
120
129
129
126
128

FIG. 8

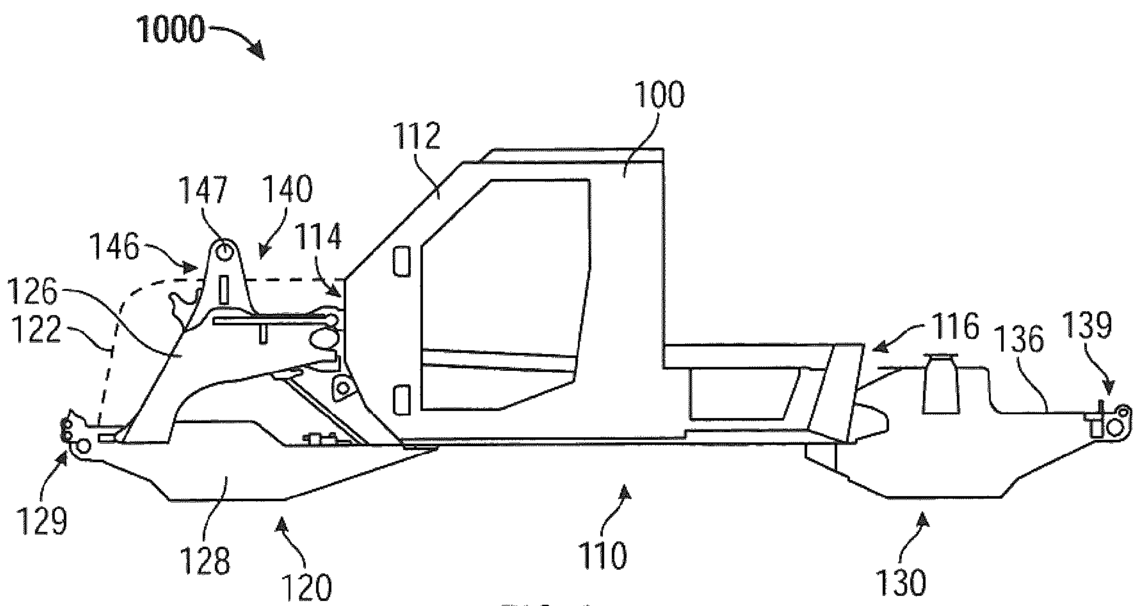
1000
100
112
147
140
146
114
126
122
116
136
139
129
128
120
110
130

FIG. 9

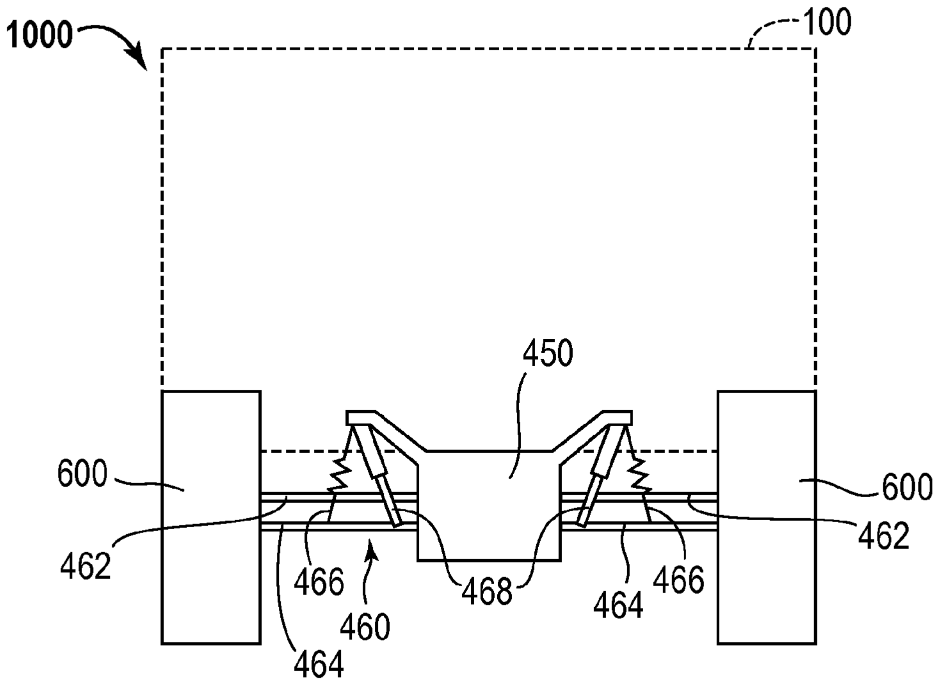

FIG. 10A

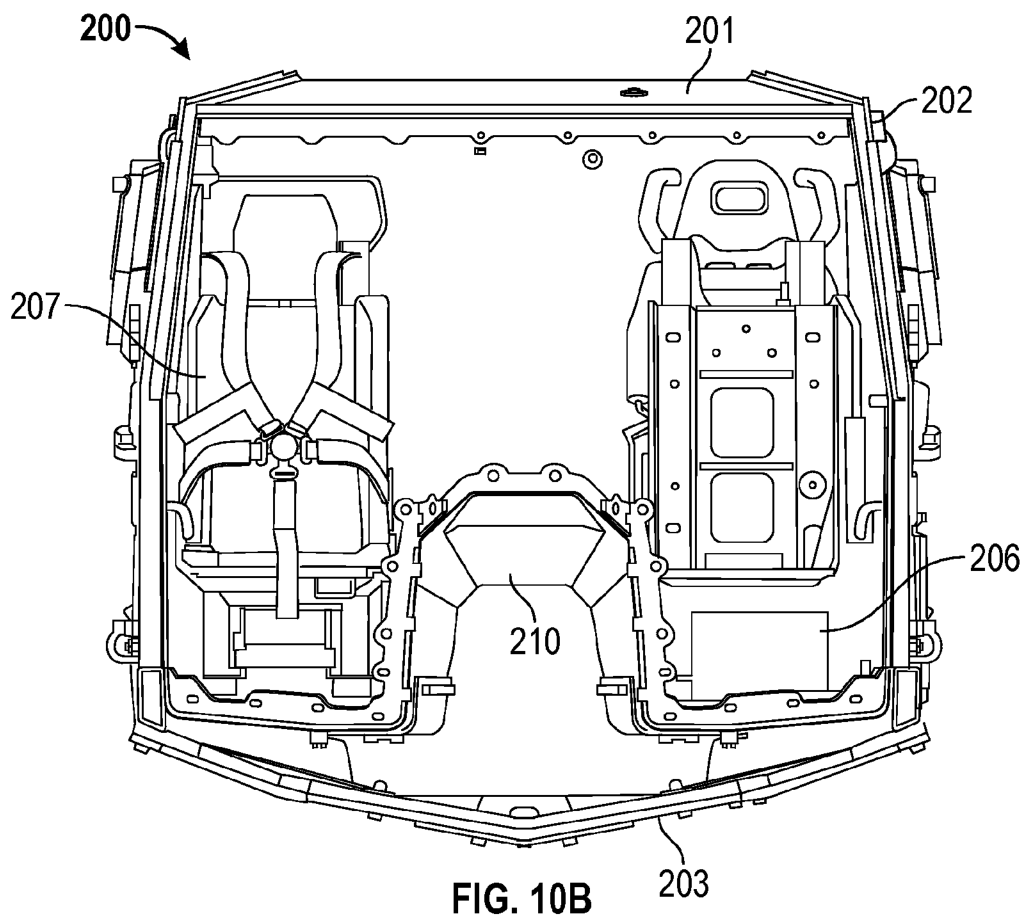

FIG. 10B

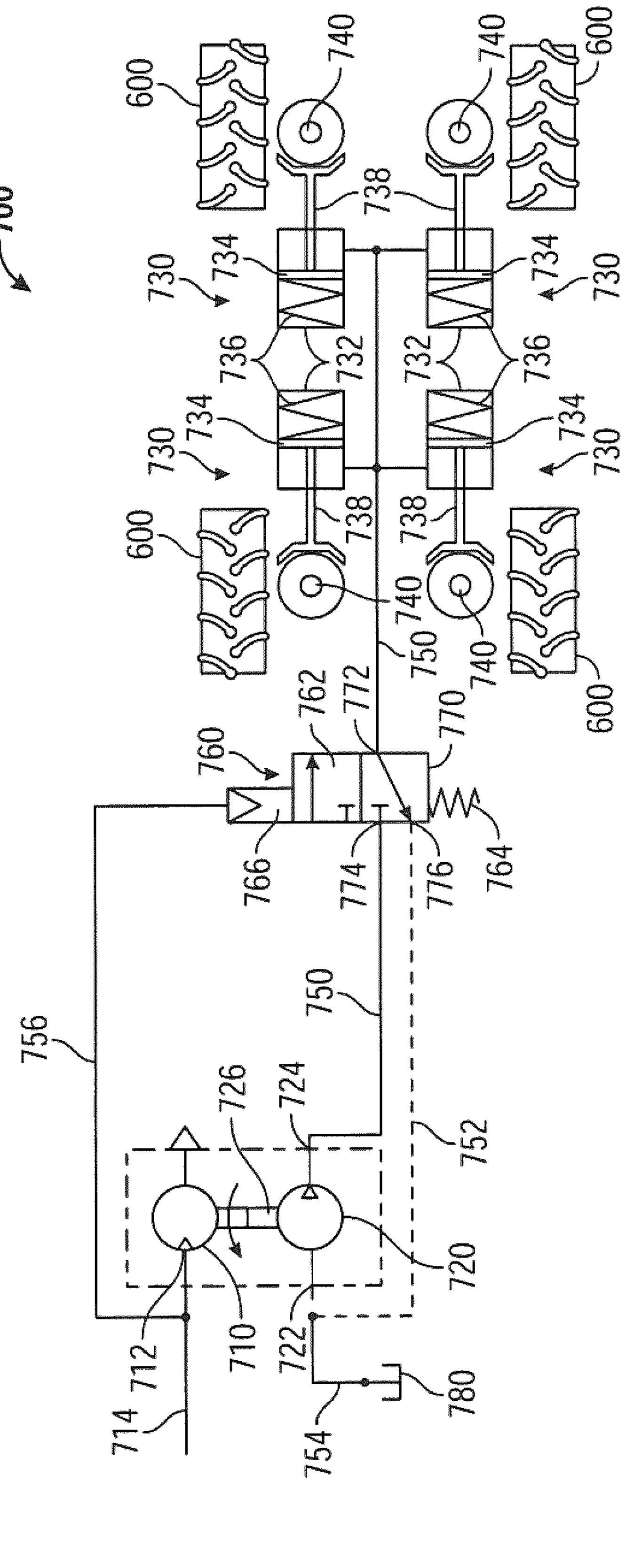
700
600
740
738
734
730
736
732
750
760
762
772
770
766
774
776
764
756
726
724
752
720
710
712
722
714
754
780

FIG. 11

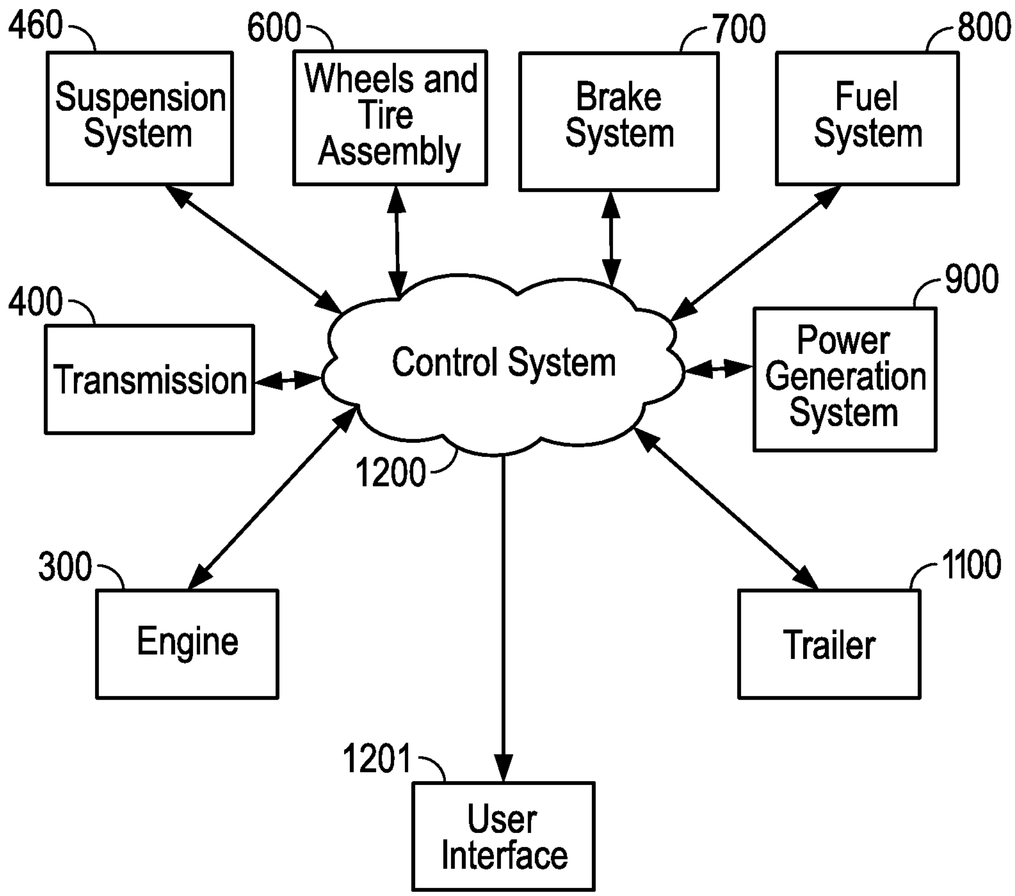
460
Suspension System
600
Wheels and Tire Assembly
700
Brake System
800
Fuel System
400
Transmission
Control System
900
Power Generation System
1200
300
Engine
1100
Trailer
1201
User Interface

FIG. 12

MILITARY VEHICLE

CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED PATENT APPLICATIONS

This application claims the benefit of U.S. Provisional Patent Application No. 61/615,812, filed Mar. 26, 2012, which is incorporated herein by reference in its entirety.

BACKGROUND

The present application relates to vehicles. In particular, the present application relates to the structural frame assembly of a military vehicle.

A military vehicle may be used in a variety of applications and conditions. These vehicles generally include a number of vehicle systems or components (e.g., a cab or body, a drive train, etc.). The military vehicle may also include various features and systems as needed for the specific application of the vehicle (e.g., a hatch, a gun ring, an antenna, etc.). Proper functioning and arrangement of the vehicle systems or components is important for the proper functioning of the vehicle.

Traditional military vehicles include a cab assembly coupled to a pair of frame rails that extend along the length of the vehicle. The drive train, engine, and other components of the vehicle are coupled to the frame rails. Such vehicles may be transported by securing lifting slings to the frame rails and applying a lifting force (e.g., with a crane, with a helicopter, etc.). As the frame rails are the primary structure of the vehicle, a lifting force applied to a rear portion and a front portion elevate the vehicle from a ground surface. In such a configuration, the components of the vehicle must be coupled to the structural frame rails thereby requiring sequential assembly.

SUMMARY

One embodiment of the invention relates to a vehicle that includes a passenger capsule, a front module, a rear module, a lift structure, and a plurality of interfaces. The passenger capsule includes a structural shell having a first end and a second end. The front module includes a first longitudinal frame member, a second longitudinal frame member, and a front axle assembly. The rear module is coupled to the second end of the passenger capsule and includes a rear axle assembly. The lift structure includes a first protrusion extending from the first longitudinal frame member and defining a first aperture and a second protrusion extending from the second longitudinal frame member and defining a second aperture. The first aperture and the second aperture form a pair of front lift points. The plurality of interfaces couples the first longitudinal frame member and the second longitudinal frame member of the front module to the first end of the structural shell such that a lifting force applied to the pair of front lift points is transmitted into the structural shell of the passenger capsule to lift the vehicle.

Another embodiment of the invention relates to a braking system for a vehicle that includes a motor having a motor inlet, a pump, and actuator, and a line. The pump includes a pump inlet, a pump outlet, and a pump input shaft rotatably coupled to the motor. The actuator includes a housing defining an inner volume, a piston slidably coupled to the housing and separating the inner volume into a first chamber and a second chamber, a resilient member coupled to the housing and configured to generate a biasing force, and a rod extending through an end of the housing and coupled to the piston. The rod is configured to apply the biasing force to a brake thereby inhibiting movement of the vehicle. The line couples the pump outlet to the actuator, and engagement of the pump provides pressurized fluid flow through the line that overcomes the biasing force and releases the brake.

Still another embodiment of the invention relates to a vehicle that includes a passenger capsule, a front module coupled to the passenger capsule, a lift structure, and a braking system. The passenger capsule includes a structural shell having a first end and a second end. The front module includes a first longitudinal frame member, a second longitudinal frame member, and a front axle assembly. The lift structure includes a first protrusion extending from the first longitudinal frame member and defining a first aperture and a second protrusion extending from the second longitudinal frame member and defining a second aperture. The first aperture and the second aperture form a pair of front lift points. The braking system includes a pump, an actuator including a rod that extends through a housing to apply a biasing force to a brake and inhibit movement of the vehicle, and a line coupling the pump to the actuator. Engagement of the pump provides a pressurized fluid flow through the line that overcomes the biasing force and releases the brake.

The invention is capable of other embodiments and of being carried out in various ways. Alternative exemplary embodiments relate to other features and combinations of features as may be recited in the claims.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

The disclosure will become more fully understood from the following detailed description, taken in conjunction with the accompanying figures, wherein like reference numerals refer to like elements, in which:

FIGS. **1-2** are a perspective views of a vehicle, according to an exemplary embodiment.

FIG. **3** is a schematic side view of the vehicle of FIG. **1**, according to an exemplary embodiment.

FIGS. **4-6** are perspective views of a vehicle having a passenger capsule, a front module, and a rear module, according to an exemplary embodiment.

FIGS. **7-9** are perspective views of a vehicle having a passenger capsule, a front module, and a rear module, according to an alternative embodiment.

FIG. **10**A is a schematic sectional view of a vehicle having at least a portion of a suspension system coupled to a transaxle, according to an exemplary embodiment, and FIG. **10**B is schematic sectional view of a vehicle having a passenger capsule, according to an exemplary embodiment.

FIG. **11** is schematic view of a braking system for a vehicle, according to an exemplary embodiment.

FIG. **12** is schematic view of a vehicle control system, according to an exemplary embodiment.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Before turning to the figures, which illustrate the exemplary embodiments in detail, it should be understood that the present application is not limited to the details or methodology set forth in the description or illustrated in the figures. It should also be understood that the terminology is for the purpose of description only and should not be regarded as limiting.

Referring to FIGS. **1-3**, a military vehicle **1000** includes a hull and frame assembly **100**, an armor assembly **200**, an engine **300**, a transmission **400**, a transaxle **450**, wheel and tire assemblies **600**, a braking system **700**, a fuel system **800**, and a suspension system **460** coupling the hull and frame assembly **100** to the wheel and tire assemblies **600**. According to an exemplary embodiment, the military vehicle **1000** includes a power generation system **900**. As shown in FIG. **1**, the military vehicle **1000** also includes a trailer **1100**.

Hull and Frame Assembly

Referring to FIG. **2**, the hull and frame assembly **100** includes a passenger capsule, shown as passenger capsule **110**, a front module, shown as front module **120**, and a rear module, shown as rear module **130**. According to an exemplary embodiment, the front module **120** and the rear module **130** are coupled to the passenger capsule **110** with a plurality of interfaces. As shown in FIG. **2**, the front module **120** includes a front axle having wheel and tire assemblies **600**.

According to an exemplary embodiment, the rear module **130** includes a body assembly, shown as bed **132**. As shown in FIG. **2**, front module **120** also includes a body panel, shown as hood **122**. In some embodiments, the hood **122** partially surrounds the engine of military vehicle **1000**. The hood **122** is constructed of a composite material (e.g., carbon fiber, fiberglass, a combination of fiberglass and carbon fiber, etc.) and sculpted to maximize vision and clear under-hood components. According to an alternative embodiment, the hood **122** is manufactured from another material (e.g., steel, aluminum, etc.). The front portion of hood **122** mounts to a lower cooling package frame, and the upper mount rests on the windshield wiper cowl. This mounting configuration reduces the number and weight of components needed to mount the hood **122**. The Oshkosh Corporation® logo is mounted to a frame structure, which is itself mounted directly to the cooling package. The hood **122** includes bumperettes **123** that provide mounting locations for antennas (e.g., a forward-facing IED jammer, a communications whip antenna, etc.). In one embodiment, the bumperettes **123** and front of the hood **122** may be reinforced (e.g., with structural fibers, structural frame members, etc.) to become structural members intended to prevent damage to the tire assemblies **600**. In an alternative embodiment, the bumperettes **123** may be crushable members or "break away" members that disengage upon impact to prevent interference between the bumperettes **123** and tire assemblies **600** in the event of a front impact.

Referring next to the exemplary embodiment shown in FIGS. **4-9**, the military vehicle **1000** includes passenger capsule **110**, front module **120**, and rear module **130**. As shown in FIGS. **4** and **7**, passenger capsule **110** includes a structural shell **112** that forms a monocoque hull structure. Monocoque refers to a form of vehicle construction in which the vehicle body and chassis form a single unit. The structural shell **112** is configured to provide a structural load path between front module **120** and rear module **130** of military vehicle **1000** (e.g., during driving, a lifting operation, during a blast event, etc.). According to an exemplary embodiment, the structural shell **112** includes a plurality of integrated armor mounting points configured to engage a supplemental armor kit (e.g., a "B-Kit," etc.). The structural shell **112** is rigidly connected to the rest of the powertrain, drivetrain, suspension, and major systems such that they all absorb blast energy during a blast event, according to an exemplary embodiment. According to an exemplary embodiment, the structural shell **112** is large enough to contain four-passengers in a standard two-by-two seating arrangement and four doors **104** are rotatably mounted to the structural shell **112**. According to the alternative embodiment shown in FIGS. **7-9**, two doors **104** are coupled to structural shell **112**. Front module **120** and rear module **130** are configured to engage a passenger capsule having either two doors or four doors, according to an exemplary embodiment. As shown in FIGS. **6** and **9**, the structural shell **112** includes a first end **114** and a second end **116**.

According to an exemplary embodiment, front module **120** includes a subframe having a first longitudinal frame member **124** and a second longitudinal frame member **126**. As shown in FIGS. **4-9**, an underbody support structure **128** is coupled to the first longitudinal frame member **124** and the second longitudinal frame member **126**. According to an exemplary embodiment, the first longitudinal frame member **124** and the second longitudinal frame member **126** extend within a common plane (e.g., a plane parallel to a ground surface). The underbody support structure **128** is coupled to the first end **114** of structural shell **112** and includes a plurality of apertures **129** that form tie down points. In some embodiments, an engine for the military vehicle **1000** is coupled to the first longitudinal frame member **124** and the second longitudinal frame member **126**. In other embodiments, the front module **120** includes a front axle assembly coupled to the first longitudinal frame member **124** and the second longitudinal frame member **126**.

As shown in FIGS. **4** and **6**, rear module **130** includes a subframe having a first longitudinal frame member **134** and a second longitudinal frame member **136**. As shown in FIGS. **4-9**, an underbody support structure **138** is coupled to the first longitudinal frame member **134** and the second longitudinal frame member **136**. According to an exemplary embodiment, the first longitudinal frame member **134** and the second longitudinal frame member **136** extend within a common plane (e.g., a plane parallel to a ground surface). The underbody support structure **138** is coupled to the second end **116** of structural shell **112**, the first longitudinal frame member **134**, and the second longitudinal frame member **136**. According to an exemplary embodiment, the first longitudinal frame member **134** and the second longitudinal frame member **136** include a plurality of apertures **139** that form tie down points. In some embodiments, a transaxle **450** or a differential for the military vehicle **1000** is coupled to at least one of the first longitudinal frame member **134** and the second longitudinal frame member **136**. In other embodiments, the rear module **130** includes a rear axle assembly coupled to the first longitudinal frame member **134** and the second longitudinal frame member **136**.

The subframes of the front module **120** and the rear module **130** may be manufactured from High Strength Steels (HSS), high strength aluminum, or another suitable material. According to an exemplary embodiment, the subframes feature a tabbed, laser cut, bent and welded design. In other embodiments, the subframes may be manufactured from tubular members to form a space frame. The subframe may also include forged, rather than fabricated or cast frame sections to mitigate the stress, strains, and impact loading imparted during operation of military vehicle **1000**. Aluminum castings may be used for various cross member components where the loading is compatible with material properties. Low cost aluminum extrusions may be used to tie and box structures together.

The structural shell **112** and the subframes of the front module **120** and the rear module **130** are integrated into the hull and frame assembly **100** to efficiently carry chassis loading imparted during operation of the military vehicle **1000**, during a lift event, during a blast event, or under still other conditions. During a blast event, conventional frame rails can capture the blast force transferring it into the vehicle. Military vehicle **1000** replaces conventional frame rails and instead includes passenger capsule **110**, front module **120**, and rear module **130**. The passenger capsule **110**, front module **120**, and rear module **130** provides a vent for the blast gases (e.g., traveling upward after the tire triggers an IED) thereby reducing the blast force on the structural shell **112** and the occupants within passenger capsule **110**. Traditional frame rails may also directly impact (i.e. contact, engage, hit, etc.) the floor of traditional military vehicles. Military vehicle **1000** that includes passenger capsule **110**, front module **120**, and rear module **130** does not include traditional frame rails extending along the vehicle's length thereby eliminating the ability for such frame rails to impact the floor of the passenger compartment. Military vehicle **1000** that includes a passenger capsule **110**, front module **120**, and rear module **130** also has an improved strength-to-weight performance, abuse tolerance, and life-cycle durability.

According to an exemplary embodiment, the doors **104** incorporate a combat lock mechanism. In some embodiments, the combat lock mechanism is controlled through the same handle that operates the automotive door latch system, allowing a passenger to release the combat locks and automotive latches in a single motion for quick egress. The doors **104** also interface with an interlocking door frame **109** defined within structural shell **112** adjacent to the latch, which helps to keep the doors **104** closed and in place during a blast even. Such an arrangement also distributes blast forces between a front and a rear door mounting and latching mechanism thereby improving door functionality after a blast event.

Lift Structure

According to an exemplary embodiment, the military vehicle **1000** may be transported from one location to another in an elevated position with respect to a ground surface (e.g., during a helicopter lift operation, for loading onto or off a ship, etc.). As shown in FIGS. **4-9**, military vehicle **1000** includes a lift structure **140** coupled to the front module **120**. According to an exemplary embodiment, the lift structure includes a first protrusion **144** extending from the first longitudinal frame member **124**, a second protrusion **146** coupled to the second longitudinal frame member **126**, and a lateral frame member **148** extending between the first protrusion **144** and the second protrusion **146**. As shown in FIGS. **4-9**, the first protrusion **144** and the second protrusion **146** extend along an axis that is generally orthogonal (e.g., within 20 degrees of an orthogonal line) to a common plane within which the first longitudinal frame member **134** and the second longitudinal frame member **126** extend. As shown in FIGS. **5-6** and **8-9**, the first protrusion **144** defines a first aperture **145**, and the second protrusion **146** defines a second aperture **147**. The first aperture **145** and the second aperture **147** define a pair of front lift points. An operator may engage the front lift points with a sling, cable, or other device to elevate military vehicle **1000** from a ground surface (e.g., for transport).

According to an exemplary embodiment, the hood **122** defines an outer surface (e.g., the surface exposed to a surrounding environment) and an inner surface (e.g., the surface facing the first longitudinal frame member **124** and the second longitudinal frame member **126**). It should be understood that the outer surface is separated from the inner surface by a thickness of the hood **122**. As shown schematically in FIGS. **4**, **6-7**, and **9**, first protrusion **144** and second protrusion **146** extend through a first opening and a second opening defined within the hood **122**. According to an exemplary embodiment, the pair of front lift points is positioned along the outer surface of the hood **122** (e.g., to provide preferred sling angles, to facilitate operator access, etc.).

According to an exemplary embodiment, the first longitudinal frame member **124** and the second longitudinal frame member **126** are coupled to the first end **114** of the structural shell **112** with a plurality of interfaces. Such interfaces may include, by way of example, a plurality of fasteners (e.g., bolts, rivets, etc.) extending through corresponding pads coupled to the front module **120** and the structural shell **112**. According to an exemplary embodiment, a lifting force applied to the pair of front lift points is transmitted into the structural shell of the passenger capsule to lift the vehicle.

In some embodiments, the military vehicle **1000** includes breakaway sections designed to absorb blast energy and separate from the remaining components of military vehicle **1000**. The blast energy is partially converted into kinetic energy as the breakaway sections travel from the remainder of military vehicle **1000** thereby reducing the total energy transferred to the passengers of military vehicle **1000**. According to an exemplary embodiment, at least one of the front module **120** and the rear module **130** are breakaway sections. Such a military vehicle **1000** includes a plurality of interfaces coupling the front module **120** and the rear module **130** to passenger capsule **110** that are designed to strategically fail during a blast event. By way of example, at least one of the plurality of interfaces may include a bolted connection having a specified number of bolts that are sized and positioned (e.g., five 0.5 inch bolts arranged in a pentagon, etc.) to fail as an impulse force is imparted on front module **120** or rear module **130** during a blast event. In other embodiments, other components of the military vehicle **1000** (e.g., wheel, tire, engine, etc.) are breakaway sections.

Referring again to the exemplary embodiment shown in FIGS. **4-6**, the military vehicle **1000** may be lifted by a pair of apertures defined within a pair of protrusions **115**. The apertures define a pair of rear lift points for military vehicle **1000**. As shown in FIG. **5**, the pair of protrusions **115** extend from opposing lateral sides of the structural shell **112**. It should be understood that a lifting force applied directly to the pair of protrusions **115** may, along with the lifting force applied to lift structure **140**, elevate the military vehicle **1000** from a ground surface. The structural shell **112** carries the loading imparted by the lifting forces applied to the lift structure **140** (e.g., through the plurality of interfaces) and the pair of protrusions **115** to elevate the military vehicle **1000** from the ground surface without damaging the passenger capsule **110**, the front module **120**, or the rear module **130**.

Armor Assembly

Referring next to the exemplary embodiment shown in FIG. **10**, the armor assembly **200** includes fabricated subassemblies (roof, floor, sidewalls, etc.) that are bolted together. The armor assembly **200** may be manufactured from steel or another material. The armor assembly **200** provides a robust and consistent level of protection by using overlaps to provide further protection at the door interfaces, component integration seams, and panel joints.

In another embodiment, the armor assembly **200** further includes a 360-degree modular protection system that uses high hard steel, commercially available aluminum alloys, ceramic-based SMART armor, and two levels of underbody mine/improved explosive device ("IED") protection. The modular protection system provides protection against kinetic energy projectiles and fragmentation produced by IEDs and overhead artillery fire. The modular protection system includes two levels of underbody protection. The two levels of underbody protection may be made of an aluminum alloy configured to provide an optimum combination of yield strength and material elongation. Each protection level uses an optimized thickness of this aluminum alloy to defeat underbody mine and IED threats.

Referring now to FIG. **10**, the armor assembly **200** also includes a passenger capsule assembly **202**. The passenger capsule assembly **202** includes a V-shaped belly deflector **203**, a wheel deflector, a floating floor, footpads **206** and energy absorbing seats **207**. The V-shaped belly deflector **203** is integrated into the sidewall. The V-shaped belly deflector

203 is configured to mitigate and spread blast forces along a belly. In addition, the wheel deflector mitigates and spreads blast forces. The "floating" floor utilizes isolators and standoffs to decouple forces experienced in a blast event from traveling on a direct load path to the passenger's lower limbs. The floating floor mounts to passenger capsule assembly **202** isolating the passenger's feet from direct contact with the blast forces on the belly. Moreover, footpads protect the passenger's feet. The energy absorbing seats **207** reduce shock forces to the occupants' hips and spine through a shock/spring attenuating system. The modular approach of the passenger capsule assembly **202** provides increased protection with the application of perimeter, roof and underbody add on panels. The components of the passenger capsule assembly **202** mitigate and attenuate blast effects, allow for upgrades, and facilitate maintenance and replacements.

The passenger capsule assembly **202** further includes a structural tunnel **210**. For load purposes, the structural tunnel **210** replaces a frame or rail. The structural tunnel **210** has an arcuately shaped cross section and is positioned between the energy absorbing seats **207**. The configuration of the structural tunnel **210** increases the distance between the ground and the passenger compartment of passenger capsule assembly **202**. Therefore, the structural tunnel **210** provides greater blast protection from IEDs located on the ground because the IED has to travel a greater distance in order to penetrate the structural tunnel **210**.

Engine

The engine **300** is a commercially available internal combustion engine modified for use on military vehicle **1000**. The engine **300** includes a Variable Geometry Turbocharger (VGT) configured to reduce turbo lag and improve efficiency throughout the engine **300**'s operating range by varying compressor housing geometry to match airflow. The VGT also acts as an integrated exhaust brake system to increase engine braking capability. The VGT improves fuel efficiency at low and high speeds and reduces turbo lag for a quicker powertrain response.

The engine **300** includes a glow plug module configured to improve the engine **300** cold start performance. In some embodiments, no ether starting aid or arctic heater is required. The glow plug module creates a significant system cost and weight reduction.

In addition, engine **300** includes a custom oil sump pickup and windage tray, which ensures constant oil supply to engine components. The integration of a front engine mount into a front differential gear box eliminates extra brackets, reduces weight, and improves packaging. Engine **300** may drive an alternator/generator, a hydraulic pump, a fan, an air compressor and/or an air conditioning pump. Engine **300** includes a top-mounted alternator/generator mount in an upper section of the engine compartment that allows for easy access to maintain the alternator/generator and forward compatibility to upgrade to a higher-power export power system. A cooling package assembly is provided to counteract extreme environmental conditions and load cases.

According to an exemplary embodiment, the military vehicle **1000** also includes a front engine accessory drive (FEAD) that mounts engine accessories and transfers power from a front crankshaft dampener/pulley to the accessory components through a multiple belt drive system. According to an exemplary embodiment, the FEAD drives a fan, an alternator, an air conditioning pump, an air compressor, and a hydraulic pump. There are three individual belt groups driving these accessories to balance the operational loads on the belt as well as driving them at the required speeds. A top-mounted alternator provides increased access for service and upgradeability when switching to the export power kit (e.g., an alternator, a generator, etc.). The alternator is mounted to the front sub frame via tuned isolators, and driven through a constant velocity (CV) shaft coupled to a primary plate of the FEAD. This is driven on a primary belt loop, which is the most inboard belt to the crank dampener. No other components are driven on this loop. A secondary belt loop drives the hydraulic pump and drive through pulley. This loop has one dynamic tensioner and is the furthest outboard belt on the crankshaft dampener pulley. This belt loop drives power to a tertiary belt loop through the drive through pulley. The tertiary belt loop drives the air conditioning pump, air compressor, and fan clutch. There is a single dynamic tensioner on this loop, which is the furthest outboard loop of the system.

Transmission, Transfer Case, Differentials

Military vehicle **1000** includes a commercially available transmission **400**. Transmission **400** also includes a torque converter configured to improve efficiency and decrease heat loads. Lower transmission gear ratios combined with a low range of an integrated rear differential/transfer case provide optimal speed for slower speeds, while higher transmission gear ratios deliver convoy-speed fuel economy and speed on grade. In addition, a partial throttle shift performance may be refined and optimized in order to match the power outputs of the engine **300** and to ensure the availability of full power with minimal delay from operator input. This feature makes the military vehicle **1000** respond more like a high performance pickup truck than a heavy-duty armored military vehicle.

The transmission **400** includes a driver selectable range selection. The transaxle **450** contains a differential lock that is air actuated and controlled by switches on driver's control panel. Indicator switches provide shift position feedback and add to the diagnostic capabilities of the vehicle. Internal mechanical disconnects within the transaxle **450** allow the vehicle to be either flat towed or front/rear lift and towed without removing the drive shafts. Mechanical air solenoid over-rides are easily accessible at the rear of the vehicle. Once actuated, no further vehicle preparation is needed. After the recovery operation is complete, the drive train is re-engaged by returning the air solenoid mechanical over-rides to the original positions.

The transaxle **450** is designed to reduce the weight of the military vehicle **1000**. The weight of the transaxle **450** was minimized by integrating the transfercase and rear differential into a single unit, selecting an optimized gear configuration, and utilizing high strength structural aluminum housings. By integrating the transfercase and rear differential into transaxle **450** thereby forming a singular unit, the connecting drive shaft and end yokes traditionally utilized between to connect them has been eliminated. Further, since the transfercase and rear carrier have a common oil sump and lubrication system, the oil volume is minimized and a single service point is used. The gear configuration selected minimizes overall dimensions and mass providing a power dense design. The housings are cast from high strength structural aluminum alloys and are designed to support both the internal drive train loads as well as structural loads from the suspension system **460** and frame, eliminating the traditional cross member for added weight savings. According to the exemplary embodiment shown in FIG. **10**A, at least a portion of the suspension system **460** (e.g., the upper control arm **462**, the lower control arm **464**, both the upper and lower control arms **462**, **464**, a portion of the spring **466**, damper **468**, etc.) is coupled to the transaxle **450**. Such coupling facilitates assembly of military vehicle **1000** (e.g., allowing for independent assembly of the rear axle) and reduces the weight of military vehicle **1000**.

The front axle gearbox also utilizes weight optimized gearing, aluminum housings, and acts as a structural component supporting internal drive train, structural, and engine loads as well. The integrated transfercase allows for a modular axle design, which provides axles that may be assembled and then mounted to the military vehicle **1000** as a single unit. An integral neutral and front axle disconnect allows the military vehicle **1000** to be flat towed or front/rear lift and towed with minimal preparation. Further, the integrated design of the transaxle **450** reduces the overall weight of the military vehicle **1000**. The transaxle **450** further includes a disconnect capability that allows the front tire assemblies **600** to turn without rotating the entire transaxle **450**. Housings of the front and rear gearbox assembly are integrated structural components machined, for example, from high strength aluminum castings. Both front and rear gearbox housings provide stiffness and support for rear module **130** and the components of the suspension system **460**.

Suspension

The military vehicle **1000** includes a suspension system **460**. The suspension system **460** includes high-pressure nitrogen gas springs **466** calibrated to operate in tandem with standard low-risk hydraulic shock absorbers **468**, according to an exemplary embodiment. In one embodiment, the gas springs **466** include a rugged steel housing with aluminum end mounts and a steel rod. The gas springs **466** incorporate internal sensors to monitor a ride height of the military vehicle **1000** and provide feedback for a High Pressure Gas (HPG) suspension control system. The gas springs **466** and HPG suspension control system are completely sealed and require no nitrogen replenishment for general operation.

The HPG suspension control system adjusts the suspension ride height when load is added to or removed from the military vehicle **1000**. The control system includes a high pressure, hydraulically-actuated gas diaphragm pump, a series of solenoid operated nitrogen gas distribution valves, a central nitrogen reservoir, a check valve arrangement and a multiplexed, integrated control and diagnostics system.

The HPG suspension control system shuttles nitrogen between each individual gas spring and the central reservoir when the operator alters ride height. The HPG suspension control system targets both the proper suspension height, as well as the proper gas spring pressure to prevent "cross-jacking" of the suspension and ensure a nearly equal distribution of the load from side to side. The gas diaphragm pump compresses nitrogen gas. The gas diaphragm pump uses a lightweight aluminum housing and standard hydraulic spool valve, unlike more common larger iron cast industrial stationary systems not suitable for mobile applications.

The suspension system **460** includes shock absorbers **468**. In addition to their typical damping function, the shock absorbers **468** have a unique cross-plumbed feature configured to provide auxiliary body roll control without the weight impact of a traditional anti-sway bar arrangement. The shock absorbers **468** may include an equal area damper, a position dependent damper, and/or a load dependent damper.

Brakes

The braking system **700** includes a brake rotor and a brake caliper. There is a rotor and caliper on each wheel end of the military vehicle **1000**, according to an exemplary embodiment. According to an exemplary embodiment, the brake system includes an air over hydraulic arrangement. As the operator presses the brake pedal, and thereby operates a treadle valve, the air system portion of the brakes is activated and applies air pressure to the hydraulic intensifiers. According to an exemplary embodiment, military vehicle **1000** includes four hydraulic intensifiers, one on each brake caliper. The intensifier is actuated by the air system of military vehicle **1000** and converts air pressure from onboard military vehicle **1000** into hydraulic pressure for the caliper of each wheel. The brake calipers are fully-integrated units configured to provide both service brake functionality and parking brake functionality.

To reduce overall system cost and weight while increasing stopping capability and parking abilities, the brake calipers may incorporate a Spring Applied, Hydraulic Released (SAHR) parking function. The parking brake functionality of the caliper is created using the same frictional surface as the service brake, however the mechanism that creates the force is different. The calipers include springs that apply clamping force to the brake rotor to hold the military vehicle **1000** stationary (e.g. parking). In order to release the parking brakes, the braking system **700** applies a hydraulic force to compress the springs, which releases the clamping force. The hydraulic force to release the parking brakes comes through a secondary hydraulic circuit from the service brake hydraulic supply, and a switch on the dash actuates that force, similar to airbrake systems.

Referring specifically to the exemplary embodiment shown in FIG. **11**, braking system **700** is shown schematically to include a motor **710** having a motor inlet **712**. The motor **710** is an air motor configured to be driven by an air system of military vehicle **1000**, according to an exemplary embodiment. The motor **710** may be coupled to the air system of military vehicle **1000** with a line **714**. As shown in FIG. **11**, braking system **700** includes a pump **720** that includes a pump inlet **722**, a pump outlet **724**, and a pump input shaft **726**. The pump input shaft **726** is rotatably coupled to the motor **710** (e.g., an output shaft of the motor **710**).

As shown in FIG. **11**, braking system **700** includes a plurality of actuators **730** coupled to the pump outlet **724**. According to an exemplary embodiment, the actuators **730** includes a housing **732** that defines an inner volume and a piston **734** slidably coupled to the housing **732** and separating the inner volume into a first chamber and a second chamber. The plurality of actuators **730** each include a resilient member (e.g., spring, air chamber, etc.), shown as resilient member **736** coupled to the housing and configured to generate a biasing force (e.g., due to compression of the resilient member **736**, etc.). According to an exemplary embodiment, the plurality of actuators **730** each also include a rod **738** extending through an end of the housing **732**. The rod **738** is coupled at a first end to piston **734** and coupled at a second end to a brake that engages a braking member (e.g., disk, drum, etc.), shown as braking member **740**. As shown in FIG. **11**, the rod is configured to apply the biasing force to the braking member **740** that is coupled to wheel and tire assemblies **600** thereby inhibiting movement of the military vehicle **1000**.

According to an exemplary embodiment, a control is actuated by the operator, which opens a valve to provide air along the line **714**. Pressurized air (e.g., from the air system of military vehicle **1000**, etc.) drives motor **710**, which engages pump **720** to flow a working fluid (e.g., hydraulic fluid) a through line **750** that couples the pump outlet **724** to the plurality of actuators **730**. According to an exemplary embodiment, the pump **720** is a hydraulic pump and the actuator **730** is a hydraulic cylinder. Engagement of the pump **720** provides fluid flow through line **750** and into at least one of the first chamber and the second chamber of the plurality of actuators **730** to overcome the biasing force of resilient member **736** with a release force. The release force is related to the pressure of the fluid provided by pump **720** and the area of the piston **734**. Overcoming the biasing force releases the brake thereby allowing movement of military vehicle **1000**.

As shown in FIG. **11**, braking system **700** includes a valve, shown as directional control valve **760**, positioned along the line **750**. According to an exemplary embodiment, directional control valve **760** includes a valve body **770**. The valve body **770** defines a first port **772**, a second port **774**, and a reservoir port **776**, according to an exemplary embodiment. When valve gate **762** is in the first position (e.g., pressurized air is not applied to air pilot **766**) valve gate **762** places first port **772** in fluid communication with reservoir port **776**. A reservoir **780** is coupled to the reservoir port **776** with a line **752**. The reservoir **780** is also coupled to the pump inlet **722** with a line **754**. It should be understood that the fluid may be forced into reservoir **780** from any number of a plurality of actuators **730** by resilient member **736** (e.g., when pump **720** is no longer engaged).

According to an exemplary embodiment, the directional control valve **760** selectively couples the plurality of actuators **730** to the pump outlet **724** or reservoir **780**. The directional control valve **760** includes a valve gate **762** that is moveable between a first position and a second position. According to an exemplary embodiment, the valve gate **762** is at least one of a spool and a poppet. The valve gate **762** is biased into a first position by a valve resilient member **764**. According to an exemplary embodiment, the directional control valve **760** also includes an air pilot **766** positioned at a pilot end of the valve gate **762**. The air pilot **766** is coupled to line **714** with a pilot line **756**. Pressurized air is applied to line **714** drives motor **710** and is transmitted to air pilot **766** to overcome the biasing force of valve resilient member **764** and slide valve gate **762** into a second position. In the second position, valve gate **762** places first port **772** in fluid communication with **774** thereby allowing pressurized fluid from pump **720** to flow into actuators **730** to overcome the biasing force of resilient member **736** and allow uninhibited movement of military vehicle **1000**.

Control System

Referring to FIG. **12**, the systems of the military vehicle **1000** are controlled and monitored by a control system **1200**. The control system **1200** integrates and consolidates information from various vehicle subsystems and displays this information through a user interface **1201** so the operator/crew can monitor component effectiveness and control the overall system. For example, the subsystems of the military vehicle **1000** that can be controlled or monitored by the control system **1200** are the engine **300**, the transmission **400**, the transaxle **450**, the suspension system **460**, the wheels and tire assemblies **600**, the braking system **700**, the fuel system **800**, the power generation system **900**, and a trailer **1100**. However, the control system **1200** is not limited to controlling or monitoring the subsystems mentioned above. A distributed control architecture of the military vehicle **1000** enables the control system **1200** process.

In one embodiment, the control system **1200** provides control for terrain and load settings. For example, the control system **1200** can automatically set driveline locks based on the terrain setting, and can adjust tire pressures to optimal pressures based on speed and load. The control system **1200** can also provide the status for the subsystems of the military vehicle **1000** through the user interface **1201**. In another example, the control system **1200** can also control the suspension system **460** to allow the operator to select appropriate ride height.

The control system **1200** may also provide in-depth monitoring and status. For example, the control system **1200** may indicate on-board power, output power details, energy status, generator status, battery health, and circuit protection. This allows the crew to conduct automated checks on the subsystems without manually taking levels or leaving the safety of the military vehicle **1000**.

The control system **1200** may also diagnose problems with the subsystems and provide a first level of troubleshooting. Thus, troubleshooting can be initiated without the crew having to connect external tools or leave the safety of the military vehicle **1000**.

The construction and arrangements of the vehicle, as shown in the various exemplary embodiments, are illustrative only. Although only a few embodiments have been described in detail in this disclosure, many modifications are possible (e.g., variations in sizes, dimensions, structures, shapes and proportions of the various elements, values of parameters, mounting arrangements, use of materials, colors, orientations, etc.) without materially departing from the novel teachings and advantages of the subject matter described herein. Some elements shown as integrally formed may be constructed of multiple parts or elements, the position of elements may be reversed or otherwise varied, and the nature or number of discrete elements or positions may be altered or varied. The order or sequence of any process, logical algorithm, or method steps may be varied or re-sequenced according to alternative embodiments. Other substitutions, modifications, changes, and omissions may also be made in the design, operating conditions and arrangement of the various exemplary embodiments without departing from the scope of the present invention.

What is claimed is:

1. A vehicle, comprising:

a passenger capsule including a structural shell having a first end and a second end;

a front module including a first longitudinal frame member, a second longitudinal frame member, and a front axle assembly, wherein the first longitudinal frame member and the second longitudinal frame member extend within a common plane;

an engine coupled to the front module;

a rear module coupled to the second end of the passenger capsule and including a rear axle assembly, wherein at least one of the front module and the rear module comprise a breakaway section;

a transaxle coupled to the rear module and the engine, wherein the transaxle includes a housing that defines a structural component of the rear module, wherein the rear axle assembly includes at least one of an upper control arm, a lower control arm, a spring, and a damper that is directly coupled to the transaxle;

a lift structure, comprising:

a first protrusion extending from the first longitudinal frame member and defining a first aperture; and

a second protrusion extending from the second longitudinal frame member and defining a second aperture, wherein the first protrusion and the second protrusion are generally orthogonal to the common plane,

wherein the first aperture and the second aperture form a pair of front lift points, wherein the passenger capsule includes a second pair of protrusions extending from opposing lateral sides of the structural shell, the second pair of protrusions defining a pair of apertures that form a pair of rear lift points; and

a plurality of interfaces coupling the first longitudinal frame member and the second longitudinal frame member of the front module to the first end of the structural shell such that a lifting force applied to the pair of front lift points is transmitted into the structural shell of the passenger capsule to lift the vehicle, wherein the plurality of interfaces are configured to fail during a blast event such that the breakaway section separates from the passenger capsule and dissipates blast energy.

2. The vehicle of claim **1**, wherein the front module and the rear module are configured to engage either of a passenger capsule that includes two passenger doors and a passenger capsule that includes four passenger doors.

3. The vehicle of claim **1**, the lift structure further comprising a lateral frame member extending between the first protrusion and the second protrusion.

4. The vehicle of claim **1**, wherein the second pair of protrusions extend backward from an edge of the passenger capsule, away from the lift structure, and along a length of the rear module.

5. The vehicle of claim **1**, wherein the passenger capsule comprises a monocoque hull structure.

6. The vehicle of claim **1**, wherein the first longitudinal frame member and the second longitudinal frame member extend below at least a portion of the passenger capsule such that a subset of the plurality of interfaces are disposed along an underside of the structural shell.

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